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SUBJECT: DPKO OFFICIAL ASKS THE U.S. TO SPEAK TO SOUTH
AFRICANS ON COTE D'IVOIRE

REF: NELSON-PLUMB E-MAIL (OCTOBER 2)

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor William Brencick. Reasons
1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hedi Annabi contacted Deputy Political Counselor on September 29 to raise concerns about finding a workable resolution to the discord over post-October political arrangements in Cote d'Ivoire. Annabi expressed frustration that the September 20 mini-Summit hosted by the Secretary-General had failed in its goal of moving the

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Ivoirian and African participants toward a broadly acceptable way out of the stalemated peace process. He criticized President Mbeki for not responding constructively at the mini-Summit to President Gbagbo's recent obstructionist tactics. Annabi made clear that UN officials believed Mbeki had played the pivotal role in ensuring the disappointing outcome. (Note: According to another DPKO participant, President Mbeki had discouraged substantive discussion of post-October arrangements at the meeting by arguing against making any decisions in Gbagbo's absence. End Note.)

¶2. (C) Annabi said UN officials were worried that the perceived South African partiality favoring Gbagbo would complicate regional efforts to prescribe new arrangements for Cote d'Ivoire at the ECOWAS summit this week and at the African Union Peace and Security Council meeting planned for later in the month. Stressing the influential role that South Africa plays in the mediation process and underscoring the importance of avoiding regional disarray on the issue, Annabi said he would welcome greater U.S. involvement in the search for a solution. He requested in particular that USG officials "speak to the South Africans" and urge them to join the U.S., the UN and other members of the AU in sending "a unified message" to President Gbagbo and other Ivoirian political leaders that the peace process must resume and that free and fair elections must be held as soon as possible.

¶3. (C) Annabi added that SRSg Schori would be contacting Ambassador Hooks in Abidjan to make a similar request.

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